



NO, NO, DON'T CALL THE
COPS, IT'S ONLY

COSTAGUANA

Volume 10, Number 2



22d March 1985

This is COSTAGUANA, a journal of postal Diplomacy and pejorative pusillanimity (you look it up!) extruded by Conrad F. von Metzke, 4374 Donald Avenue, San Diego, CA 92117-3813. Telephones: Home, (619) 276-2937. Office, (619) 566-2170 or 566-2190. Subscriptions cost \$2.20 for ten issues. Trades are gleefully accepted, all-for-all only. Game openings fail to exist.

Two crises are currently plaguing this publication. Neither is overwhelming, but both are bloody annoying.

First: Now that I've changed work locations, the reasonably decent photocopy machine is lost to me. The one we have where I work now is garbage, and even at its best cannot reproduce anything really legible. To make matters worse, at the former office there was a commercial copy shop right next door to which I could fall back in the event of problems (and I did so twice). I am afforded no such luxury now. And as a consequence it is taking me a considerable time just to get the damned things printed. I pretty well have to wait until my day off - which rotates week to week - and use the copy shop near my home. I have a couple of ideas to try (involving having other people drop off and pick up the masters) but haven't really explored this one yet. Please give me time.

Second: It looks like a couple of player copies of the last issue failed to arrive. Normally this would probably not be a big deal; I've published fairly reliably up until last Christmas, and it is reasonable to suppose that a player would know roughly when to expect an issue and would scream if it hadn't arrived within a few days of expectation. But after that outrageous layover between the prior two, nobody could possibly have known when I'd actually go to press! So they didn't think to ask until rather recently.

Well, what can we do? There really isn't much choice: We must put a hold on two of the three games. Duplicate copies of the previous issue are already en route (probably have arrived by now), and the deadlines will be extended accordingly.

What worries me most about such a situation is that one (or more) of you may logically be expected to be losing interest by this time. I shudder to think of the potential number of dropouts we're in for. If by chance you're in this category, I certainly understand; but for the sake of continuity and your fellow players, would you please let me know your loss of faith and/or interest as soon as possible so that I can replace you and continue the games with the least possible disruption? Please???

A few of you who sent in moves, did so to the old p.o. box. Please note the change of address and correct your records.

I've been asked, by players who are apparently unsure of future intentions, if I will publish press. Hell, yes!



One of the more interesting of the minor heads of state in this world is the Sultan of Brunei, Sir Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzadin Waddaulah al-Omar. Now in his late thirties, Sultan Hassanal has been in power for eighteen years, ever since his father abdicated in his favor.

Brunei is an odd place. It is the world's newest fully independent nation, having given up its status as a British Protectorate on January 1st, 1984. It consists in two small enclaves (unconnected to each other) on the northwest coast of the island of Borneo. Barely 2200 square miles in combined size, and with a population well under 100,000, it has been in existence as a nation since at least the fifteenth century. Magellan's expedition visited in 1521, and found a prosperous nation in control of a rather vast empire consisting in the entire island of Borneo plus several other islands extending as far as the present-day Philippines. (Sultan Hassanal is the twenty-ninth of his line.) For various reasons, the dominions fell into decay late in the 1700s, and by the time various European powers began their incursions in the area in the early 1800s, Brunei was little more than a nest of pirates and headhunters. Territorial losses made severe inroads: the Sultan of Sulu took the areas in the Philippines, the British took Labuan, the Dutch took the bulk of Borneo, and extensive territories were simply given away to a British corporation (North Borneo) and a British adventurer (Sarawak). By the 1880s, Brunei was all but extinct; its existence was only preserved by a border dispute among Brunei, North Borneo and Sarawak, which caused all three states to be confirmed in their existing boundaries and placed under British protection in 1888. Even then, Brunei remained oblivious to its own insignificance and decline: The country's single greatest economic asset, a deep and high-grade coal mine at Brooketon (now Muara), had been leased to Sarawak for development. The mine was not reclaimed until 1907, by which time it had been heavily depleted.

But Borneo was one area in which the British Colonial authorities actually did some fine work in developing the areas for native benefit. Part of this may have been as a result of the influence of the three "White Rajahs" of neighboring Sarawak, who operated throughout their consecutive reigns (1841-1946) as benevolent monarchs for the benefit of their subjects. Brunei's mineral and timber wealth was exploited in a well-managed fashion, and the native population reaped an unusually high share of the profits.

And then came 1929. In the U.S., this meant economic devastation; in Brunei, the opposite is true. In that year the oil fields at Seria were discovered, and a new era began for Brunei.

At first, the tapping of the oil was rather limited. This proved a good thing, because in December 1941 Brunei was overrun by the Japanese and was not liberated until September 1945. The occupation period was one of concentration camps, a high death toll, and economic devastation; but it might have been worse had the true potential of the Seria fields been known. (Nearby North Borneo, which was far better developed, was so thoroughly devastated that the Chartered Company, after the war, found itself unable to rebuild and was forced to dissolve.) After a short period of postwar military rule, Brunei resumed its existence and began the process of re-development.

And then, in the early 1950s, Shell Oil surveyed the Seria oil fields in depth and came to the conclusion that this single deposit was the richest on the face of the earth. At that point, development began in earnest.

And so did something else - nationalism. Unlike his predecessors, the Sultan of Brunei in the 1950s, Sir Omar Ali Saifuddin Wasa-adul Khairi Wad'din, who succeeded to the throne in 1950, was a shrewd and energetic man. Oxford-educated, he began negotiating with the British authorities even before the Shell survey for a greater share of the profits from the various mining and timbering operations, and in a firm but reasonable manner began pressuring for eventual full independence. He had no objection to a long-term timetable, but he insisted on a succession of small stages in the process, each of which would retain more of the profits of the various industries in Brunei. (It is worth noting that, though he abdicated in his son's favor in 1967, Omar remains to this day a major figure in the government.)

There was one brief "hiccup" in this steady cycle of progress. In 1961, the British authorities announced a plan whereby all British territories in the area - Brunei, Sarawak, North Borneo, and Malaya - would be unified and given independence as a single nation in 1963. Brunei at first agreed, subject to negotiations regarding the distribution of oil revenues, and with that the feces hit the fan. Opposition to the proposed merger grew and finally broke into open revolution in the summer of 1962. The uprising was quickly quelled with the help of British troops, but the point was made, and the oil revenue negotiations collapsed shortly thereafter. Brunei opted out of the federation, and a course was then charted for individual independence for the Sultanate. It took another twenty-one years, but the result finally was achieved in 1984 when British and Bruneian negotiators (Brunei's delegate was ex-Sultan Omar) held a ceremony terminating all British control. At the same ceremony, Omar also announced and publicly signed Brunei's application to join the United Nations.

So Malaysia lost the Seria oil revenues, and Brunei kept them all to itself. And as a consequence, Brunei is now held to be the world's world's wealthiest nation in terms of per capita income (\$23,000), and

Sultan Hassanal is the wealthiest individual on the face of this planet (his personal income exceeds two million dollars per day). Brunei, a Moslem country, has the world's largest mosque (complete with air conditioning and an elevator up to the minaret), the world's largest royal palace (one and one-half times the size of Buckingham), and so little need for money that it maintains no national tourist agency and sells no vast quantities of postage stamps to gullible collectors. It does not exist in a vacuum, however; the Sultan recently purchased the landmark Dorchester Hotel in London as an investment, and he has also recently announced co-sponsorship of an annual prize for the best English-language novel written each year.

NEXT: The fabulous Malaya-Borneo Exhibition of May 1922.

//////// //

Last issue propounded a question: What member of the U.S. Senate was once the defendant in a lawsuit filed by Adolf Hitler?

The answer: Alan Cranston of California. This happened in the mid-1930's, and involved a dispute over title to a parcel of land in Colorado. Cranston won.

.....

for what it's worth

It's Game Time!

NOTE TO ALL PLAYERS IN ALL GAMES: In an effort to catch up just a teensy bit, the next deadline will be very soon. Specifically, your next moves will be due FRIDAY, APRIL 12, 1985. Moves on file for the two delayed games may be revised any time up until then.

GAME TWO (1984HI): Winter 1902

AUSTRIA (Pierce): Build a vie, a bud. Has: a's sev, ser, tyo, tri, gal, vie, bud; f bul sc (8).

ENGLAND (Johnston): a nwy; f's lvp, nth, bar (4).

FRANCE (Fleming): a's pie, gas; f's mid, tyn, wal (5).

GERMANY (Walker): Builds f kie. Has: a's bel, mun, ber; f's kie, hol, swe (6 - 1 short).

ITALY (Peel): a's ven, apu; f's nap, ion (4).

RUSSIA (Cartier): Removes a sil. Has: a fin; f bot (2).

TURKEY (Stevens): Removes f eas. Has: a's mos, ukr; f's aeg, bla (4).

Note the deadline on Friday, April 12.

MURMANSK: Gosh, it's almost 1903 and I'm still on the board - is that a record?

JAMUL: No, I distinctly remember one game where you survived all the way to 1906. (By the way: Did you ever find out why those six other players dropped out?)

LA DONNA É MOBILE

The last few months has been so confused in this magazine that I think the following item is useful.

Moves are on file in the three games only from the following people. If your name is not listed, I beg you: Either send moves or notify me of your loss of interest. Thank you!

GAME ONE (For Spring 1907): Robson, Pustilnik, Johnston, Stevens.

GAME TWO (For Spring 1903): Cartier, Stevens, Pierce, Johnston.

GAME THREE (For Fall 1901): Walker, Caruso, Pustilnik, Brown, Cartier.

NEW ADDRESS: Pete Robson, 2327 Middle Creek Lane, Reston, VA 22091.

Having thoroughly surveyed that submissions list above, I can say that there is only one real possibility of a player dropping out. All others have been heard from one way or another. That's nice to know....

~~~~~ !!!!! ~~~~~ !!!!! ~~~~~ !!!!! ~~~~~ !!!!! ~~~~~ !!!!! ~~~~~ !!!!!

AND NOW, IT GIVES ME GREAT PLEASURE

to announce to the world (or at least a tiny portion of it) the birth of the following noble individual:

JAMES A STEVENS III

Date of birth, 7th January 1985. Length: 21 1/4 inches (geez!).  
Weight: 6 lbs. 8 oz. (Nyaah! I was bigger!)

Jim doesn't specify, but one presumes that it was a boy. Either that or he and his wife have a rather strange taste in names....

And, inasmuch as Jim's news was dated when the little twerp was nine weeks old already, I gather that momma and sonny-boy are healthy and survived the ordeal nicely. Of course, the parents may be wondering along about now what the word "sleep" means....

In all sincerity - my best to you; I hope you enjoy the hell out of one another. Please keep us posted on all the usual stuff, first step, first word, first time you ever get so mad at the little \$&#%!!& that you wish he'd run away from home....

- - - - -  
I would think that I have bothered all of you sufficiently for this round. More yummys on tap for next time, so stay tuned. As a grabber, let me tell you that our next installment will contain one of the most exciting moments in COSTAGUANA history:

A new, updated mailing list!

Ta.

Whups. One more note to Matt Johnston: Sorry, I haven't the faintest notion what piece of music you refer to. However, if ever you need a Haydn symphony identified, I have just finished developing and executing a computer program which will identify the theme of any movement of any of the 108 symphonies. Next: secondary themes, string quartets, and the Masses. And maybe my stamp collection....

Ta<sup>2</sup>.

